

HOUSE BILL 327

K3, C8

3lr0388

By: **Delegate Rosenberg**

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2023

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Employment Advancement Right Now Program – Strategic Industry**
3 **Partnerships – Definition**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the Maryland Employment Advancement Right Now
5 Program by altering the definition of “strategic industry partnership” to include a
6 collaboration between a single employer and other partners in which the employer
7 offers to its employees workforce development and training to address certain
8 workforce needs and shortages; and generally relating to the Maryland Employment
9 Advancement Right Now Program.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Article – Labor and Employment
12 Section 11–701
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
16 Article – Labor and Employment
17 Section 11–702
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Labor and Employment**

23 11–701.

24 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(b) “Credential” means a recognized:

(1) educational diploma;

(2) certificate or degree;

(3) occupational license;

(4) apprenticeship certificate;

(5) industry recognized certification; or

(6) award for skills attainment and completion, issued by an approved training provider in the State or third-party credential provider.

(c) “High-demand occupation” means an occupation that:

(1) has a significant presence within target industries;

(2) is in demand by employers; and

(3) pays or leads to payment of a family sustaining wage.

(d) “Identifiable skill” means the attainment of proficiency in a specific work-related skill that is likely to lead to future job advancement and improvement in an individual’s earning potential.

(e) (1) “Job readiness training” means training for the purpose of assisting and supporting jobseekers in overcoming individual barriers to employment and developing the skills necessary to maintain employment and to qualify for skills training opportunities.

(2) “Job readiness training” includes:

(i) occupational skills development;

(ii) GED preparation;

(iii) literacy advancement;

(iv) financial stability services, including financial coaching;

(v) credit counseling;

(vi) transportation; and

(vii) child care.

(f) “Local board” means a local workforce development board established to administer services in a workforce development area established under Subtitle 5 of this title.

(g) “Maryland EARN Program” means the Maryland Employment Advancement Right Now Program created under this subtitle.

(h) **(1)** “Strategic industry partnership” means a collaboration that brings together a regional group that may include employers, nonprofits, institutions of higher education, community colleges, local boards, local governments, or other relevant partners to:

[(1)] (I) identify common workforce needs for high-demand occupations within a target industry; and

[(2)] (II) develop and implement industry strategies to meet the common workforce needs and shortages based on regional needs.

(2) “STRATEGIC INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP” INCLUDES A COLLABORATION BETWEEN A SINGLE EMPLOYER AND OTHER PARTNERS IN WHICH THE EMPLOYER OFFERS TO ITS EMPLOYEES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING TO ADDRESS THE IDENTIFIED WORKFORCE NEEDS AND SHORTAGES DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

(i) “Target industry” means a group of employers closely linked by a common product or service, workforce skills, similar technologies, supply chains, or other economic ties.

11–702.

(a) In this section, “CTE Committee” means the Career and Technical Education Committee established under § 21–207 of the Education Article.

(b) There is a Maryland Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Program in the Department.

(c) The purpose of the Maryland EARN Program is to create industry-led partnerships to advance the skills of the State’s workforce, grow the State’s economy, and increase sustainable employment for working families.

(d) The Department, in consultation with the Department of Commerce, the CTE Committee, and the Governor’s Workforce Development Board, shall establish and administer the Maryland EARN Program to provide grants on a competitive basis for:

(1) an approved strategic industry partnership for development of a plan consistent with the purpose of the Maryland EARN Program;

1 (2) workforce training programs and other qualified programs that provide
2 industry valued skills training to individuals that result in a credential or identifiable skill
3 consistent with an approved strategic industry partnership plan;

4 (3) job readiness training and skills training that results in a credential or
5 an identifiable skill; and

6 (4) collectively bargained, registered apprenticeships that:

7 (i) are working to incorporate the apprenticeship's curriculum into
8 high school career and technical education programs;

9 (ii) are working to ensure that community college credits are
10 available for instruction provided by an apprenticeship sponsor; or

11 (iii) offer apprenticeships to high school students.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
13 October 1, 2023.